

GRAPE VINE

She was astonished to hear all the students staying in Acton admit they had just seen the horizon for the very first time in their lives.

Marilyn, the organizer, said she realized how crowded Japan was, but a remark like that really puts things we take for granted in perspective.

The students being overwhelmed by all the empty space and nature being right on their doorstep reminded her of science fiction movies where trees are scarce and strawberries are more expensive than caviar.

Bus trip

Space is still available for anyone interested in a trip to the White Rose Nursery's "Festival of Roses" in Uxbridge. The Aug. 7 bus trip planned by the Acton Horticultural Society costs \$15 for the bus; entrance to the nursery is free.

Many events have been planned and you can bring your own lunch if you don't want to buy it at the festival.

Call Phyliss at 853-0006 for more information.

New store

The new store going in next to Mr. Mugs in the IGA plaza will be a discount store, says plaza owner Mike Manes.

Mike expects the store to be open for business in about two weeks, and he thinks a discount clearance store will be perfect for Acton considering the tough economic times.

The store will sell shoes, clothing and everything imaginable, he says, adding it will be the perfect place for every bargain hunter in the town.

First horizon

The Acton organizer of the Japanese exchange students' visit says that while she was giving the students their nature lessons last week she was astonished by an observation the students made.

In the pink

Last week the birds holding up painting of the Doll Emporium left their nest, so the owner had it removed from his store front and the cans of pink paint were opened to finish the job.

He was holding up the paint job until the birds were big enough to fly away before disturbing their home.

Support group

This September the Acton Social Services and Information Centre will be running support groups for sex abuse survivors.

If you are interested or know of someone who might be, phone ASSIC at 853-3310.

OMB hearings

After four exhausting weeks of hearings, the Ontario Municipal Board hearings paused for a short holiday last Friday, and are presently scheduled to start up again Aug. 5 and 6.

This will be followed by another week-long recess before they resume.

HEY!

What is your response to the DFO's stalling of Acton development?

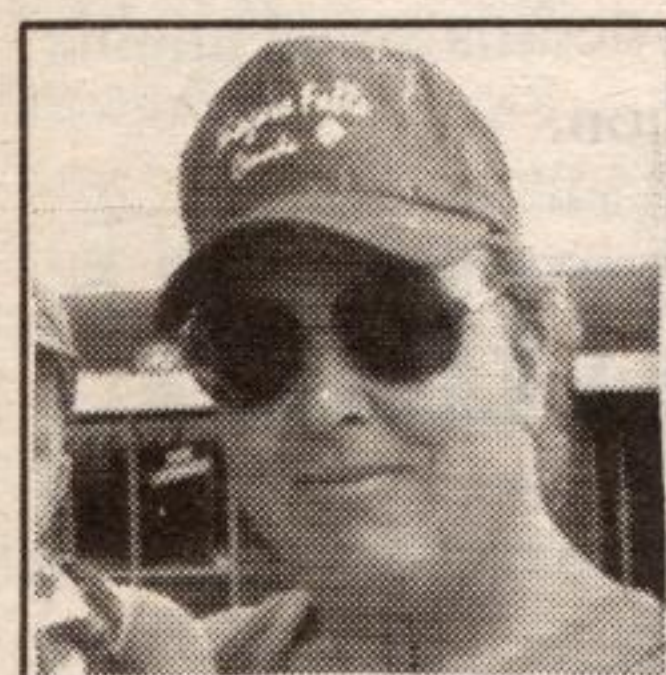


"I think they should get on with it (development). Rockwood's building up nicely and I think they should liven up Acton a bit — get a (theatre) here and some industries. The older people will be all gone by the time studies are done."

Robert Holmes, Holmesway Place

"The people of Acton are getting frustrated. Every time someone comes up with a new study, the delays are even further. This has been going on for years and it should've been dealt with."

Jacque Wright, Welcome Wagon employee



"I don't know why they're stalling. They've been stalling in Acton for years. It's about time they get something done. The rest of Halton seems to be getting developed."

Jim Knapton, Clare Court

"They're trying to clutter things in Acton. There are so many sub-divisions and enough people around. I like it the way it is, but (the DFO) will do what they want no matter what I say. We need something here for the younger people."

Crystal Begin, Mill Street



Gene and Janet Clarke run Mill Street Sports Card Connection. (Doug Harrison photo)

Card collecting an 'addiction'

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

This much is for certain. Sports Card collecting is an addiction.

For a lot of us it started by flicking the card of any athlete against the wall and bellowing, "It's okay, I've got doubles of him."

A few years later, you were big enough to ask Dad for that three or five-speed bicycle.

Then you approached Mom with The Question. Where do you keep your clothes pegs? It was as easy as getting a piece of gum in a pack of O-Pee-Chee hockey cards.

Bring together the card and clothes peg and stick it in the bike's spokes and you were in business: instant motor bike.

Then when this craze ended, you tossed the left-overs in a garage sale.

About five years ago, the same people scurried wall-to-wall in their house looking for that Gordie Howe or Wayne Gretzky rookie card.

The days when sports card collecting was considered the "money-grabbing industry," and the only people in it wanted to make a buck are over.

Now, the true collectors are becoming the majority, says

Gene Clarke, co-owner with wife Janet of Sports Card Connection on Mill Street East, beside Al & Al's Meats.

"Some kids that come in have great expectations for cards to go up in value in a week or month," says Gene, who got the itch to collect again a few years back after giving sets of cards to his son Sean, 19, as gifts. "They don't understand that it takes time for the value to increase over a period of years."

The Guelph resident has vastly grown his stock of mostly hockey cards. He opened the store with between 20,000 and 30,000 cards. Walk in there today and he'll tell you 600,000.

Business is slow in July and August, but kids keep dropping in to look for that "special" card.

He singles out the Hide House closure, the economy and the fact both baseball and hockey sets arrived seven months ago.

"We've really noticed a difference on weekends since the Hide House closed," says Gene, who relied on out-of-towners en route to the leather

company. Recently he had visitors from Florida, Germany and England.

The big card industry news, says Gene, was announced during last year's National Hockey League strike: no more licencing of card companies.

Topps and Topps Stadium will be the only hockey card manufacturers next season. Bowman and, most likely, O-Pee-Chee and O-Pee-Chee Premier are history. O-Pee-Chee may strictly be a distributor for Topps.

O-Pee-Chee, the Canadian trademark, have been around since the 1968-69 season, when there were 216 cards and it valued at \$1,500.

Gene predicts people will benefit by keeping card collecting a hobby this year: "What happened was, when the boom in collecting cards started about five years ago, the companies got all excited and mass produced cards and flooded the market and the price reflected this."

"You really would be surprised at how much money people have wrapped up in cards in a small town like Acton," offers Janet.

Sounds like an addiction.

